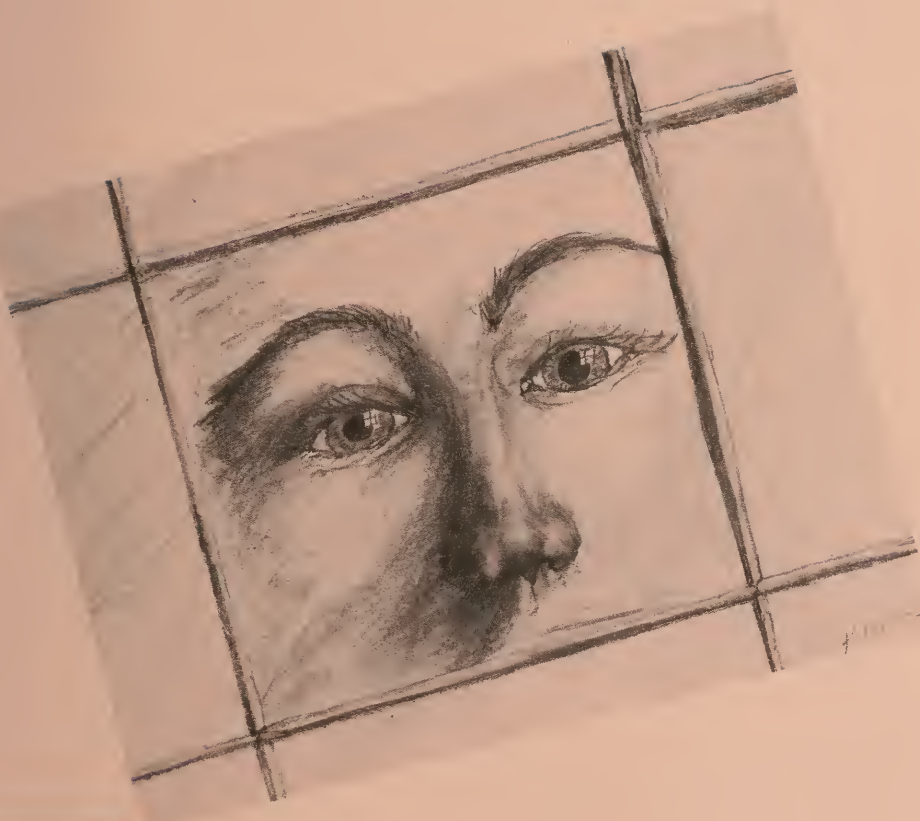
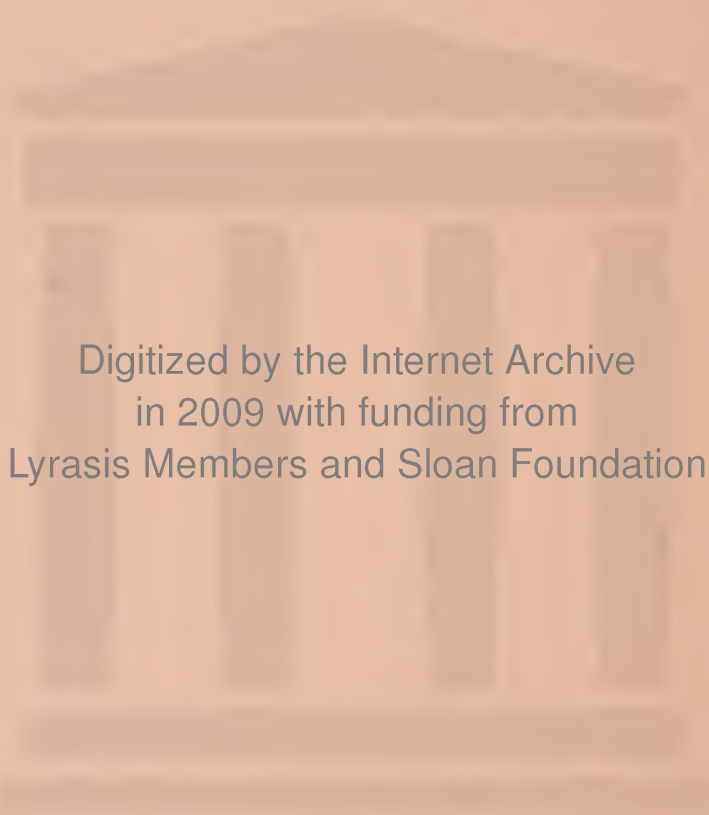


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*Windows to  
our hearts.*



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# Legacy

1994

Many late nights I sit on my bed with a phone in one hand and my poem book in the other. As the hours creep by, I read to a friend samples of what I have written. It is not my poems I am sharing, though. It is me.

By reading my poems, I am allowing my friend to see into secret chambers of my heart which I save for moments of sheer joy or desperate pain. My poems are indeed windows into my heart.

The poems and stories shared in this *Legacy* are also windows. They are windows into the hearts of Southern College students who wish to share with you a view of who they are.

As you look into these windows, it is my hope that you will be able to share with the authors the feelings they are expressing. And tonight, should you get the urge to pick up the phone and call up a friend, don't forget to leave your poem book within reach. After all, you too may wish to open up some windows.

Lori Pettibone, editor

## Contest Judges

Elaine Eggbert

Author

Robert Garren

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Jeff Lemon

WSMC Development

Yvette Norcott

Contract English Teacher

Lynn & Helen Sauls

Chairman Journalism and Communications  
& Associate Professor of Education

## Legacy Staff

Lori Pettibone, editor

Matthew Brass, art director

Helen Pyke, sponsor

*"A writer is working when he is staring out the window."*

--Author unknown

## Ode to a Manuscript

White, uncaring, full of nothing  
Ever feeling none but me.  
I will render now my blessing  
To your white tranquillity.

Words, quite certain, not of pleasure  
From my humble heart do flee,  
Through my pen and ink blotch spoken  
To your flesh in irony.

Hear my heart and see my passion  
Spilling like a blood from me.  
Show to all my life undaunted  
Through the tears I've spilt on thee.

*--Jim Lounsbury*



Illusions

images

d n i g

a c n

in my mind,  
conceived by music.

--Larisa Myers

You enter-  
a million times,  
we are restored . . .  
a k i s s ,  
a rose,  
a joyous hug;  
the  
music  
.stops.

I open  
my eyes

I am

alone.

--Nicole Planter

The boy watches the television  
with a blank stare.  
A sage, it gives him  
all he needs to know.  
It gives him a view  
of life lived  
in half-hour blocks,  
and plastic death  
on the 6 o'clock news.

--Scott Walker

### **An Empty Bed to Hold Him**

How can she like someone  
That grates her nerves?  
All he does is call...

call...

call!

Day and night—any time.  
It doesn't matter if she's  
Tired, sick, or sleeping  
She gets so annoyed  
That she turns off the phone  
So she can't hear the rings  
And waits for the caller  
To respond to the rude  
Answering machine message.

Though,  
How can she hate him?  
He's just like her—human.  
He's just like her—lonely.  
He comes home  
To an empty apartment,  
an empty living room,  
an empty kitchen,  
an empty bedroom,

an empty bed.

And all he wants is someone to call,  
“How was your day?”  
Just needs someone to listen,  
to hold his hand,

to hold him.

And he still calls...

calls...

calls.

And she still doesn't answer.

--Tanya Cochran

*First prize winner, art*  
*Drawing by Matthew Brass*





sun

he sweetly  
drags his fingers  
over my arms,  
combing the tiny  
hairs that stand  
at attention at his  
presence.

The heat of his  
hand—silent  
and still  
in it's home—  
radiates my skin,  
penetrates,  
and runs  
like honey  
through my veins—  
slow, thick,  
paralyzing.

--Tanya Cochran

The new sun shines on  
Crimson spring flowers that grow  
near new stone crosses.

--Scott Walker



--Scott Gaptill

**Assurance--an earnest statement intended to give confidence**

In this life.....

We travel along the edge of the world and almost slip over  
the side.

Take my hand and we'll be o.k.

We climb the highest mountains of success and boulders  
tumble all around us.

Take my hand and we'll be o.k.

Only fingers of death can overcome us, hand in hand.

Sleep is so sweet as we wait for the Maker to bring us  
another life.

When He wakes us, "Take My hand" He'll say, "and We'll  
be o.k."

--Jennifer Attaway



They build slowly with suspense  
And break  
At climax.  
The thunder of impact lays on my senses  
Like Grandmother throwing three heavy quilts  
On top of the two already covering me—  
Thick, heavy,  
But  
Not smothering. No.  
I find my peace here—  
In the thousands of watery fingers  
Playing the shore  
Like a grand piano  
Running furiously over the keys.  
Yet its simple tune is like a symphony.  
Rolling, peaking, turning, crashing...  
Aaahhh! And resolving...  
The experienced hands run up the shore's keyboard  
Like a confident, charging cavalry  
Then retreat like  
A scolded, cowered mutt  
Only to reengage with fresh strength.  
I find my peace here—  
Peace within the stormy thunder and crack,  
The pounding lull  
Of the sea.

--Tonya Cochran



--Geysa Mastrapa



--Scott Guptill

We were each wrapped in loneliness,  
two darkened songbirds  
refused by the flock.  
But now the sad harmony we share.

--Scott Walker

## **"Help, I think I got on the wrong ride."**

*By Paul Nevala*

If life was one big amusement park, with the food booths being different experiences that you taste, the game booths being the risks you take, and the rides being the things you learn and grow from, then my first experience with love could best be described as a triple-loop roller coaster with loads of twists and turns.

I approached the roller coaster with awe; long ago I had heard of the many thrills it offered. Nobody had told me to be the least bit fearful of love; no one let me know that the turns and loops weren't all fun, so I hurried to get in line with everybody else. It wasn't until I was standing in line, waiting for the ride to begin, that a voice offered certain warning about the ride I was about to embark on. I let the warnings go unheeded, too wrapped up in a sense of euphoria to pay attention to such trivial nuisances.

The first sense I had that maybe everything wasn't going to be as dandy as I had originally thought was when they tightened the lap belts as I sat in the seat. I didn't care for the feeling of restriction, but I told myself that certain things had to be sacrificed in the name of love. My anxiety virtually vanished as the cars began their ascent of the first hill. Things in my relationship were going smoothly, without even a hint of the steep hill I was about to plummet down. I was having fun, and as far as I could tell, it was the best time of my life thus far.

Things all changed when the first of the cars went over the brink of the first hill. As we began to know each other better, hidden emotions and hurt from her past surfaced. Terror built inside of me as I saw what was approaching, and as I felt myself racing downwards, I couldn't help but scream out. I thought things had leveled out a bit after that first misunderstanding, but before I knew it, I was racing through loop after loop, my mind reeling all the while.

Before any of this had happened, I had been a child, so to speak. I had basically no idea of all the pain and suffering in the world. Because I had chosen to participate on this "love ride," soon all the worries and the fear and the pain had become my own. I lived moment by moment, constantly wondering what obstacle I would be faced with next.

Eventually, I could see the station in sight. Fights and arguments had become commonplace, and I knew that the ride was almost over. I couldn't quite make up my mind as to what I wanted. I didn't want to get off, but yet I had no logical reason to stay on.

When the ride finally came to an end, I felt a huge empty void inside. I'd never realized that life's loops and turns weren't as fun as they looked from the ground. I never knew that along with the fun came the trials and fear. As I stood on the ground, in the shadows of the looming roller coaster of love that I'd just been on, I couldn't help but wonder what had gone wrong.

The whole encounter had left me feeling more than a little sick, so I was content to simply wander around the park of life for awhile, without actually taking part in what it had to offer me.

In time, I happened upon another ride that caught my eye. This one looked just as colorful and exciting as the first, but without even a hint of danger. It is said that the best way to know if it's true love or not is to go with your initial feeling, and it was for this reason that I knew getting on the merry-go-round was a good choice.

Almost a year has passed since I got on that merry-go-round, and in all honesty, I couldn't be happier. The ride creaks a little sometimes, but I am so engrossed in the deeper feelings of security and happiness, and in the wonderful music in the background, that I barely notice.



*Drawing by  
Geysa Mastrapa*

## Window

I used to spend my days  
    laughing  
        and singing  
            and running  
                in the sunshine.

I was young and free  
                    and eager to love  
    unaware of the pain that  
        love could bring.

Till those who claimed  
            they loved me  
turned away,  
    throwing stones at  
        my unprotected heart.

I took the stones  
    and used them  
        to build a wall around me.

Inside my wall I crouched.  
    Afraid to leave,  
        Afraid to love,  
    Yet afraid I'd never love again.

It was there you found me.  
    Gently, you reached out to me  
        and  
            pulled  
                the  
                    stones  
                        away,  
creating a window for me  
                    to look through.

Now I spend my days  
    gazing out my window.  
I feel the warmth of the sunshine  
    and hear the children's laughter  
and music plays in my heart again.

--Lori Pettibone

## Respite

Looking  
    in your eyes,  
    silence speaks;  
ETERNITY  
    in one  
    short  
    moment;  
depths of caring  
    in shades of brown,  
ENFOLDED -  
    in a gaze,  
sharing a kiss  
    from a distance;  
    looking away -  
the walls are up again.

*--Nicole Planter*

## Umbrellas

I wade through umbrellas  
    protected from the elements  
    and the workings of your soul.  
I hide under the umbrellas  
    scared of the water  
    and who you really are  
Under the cautious protection  
    of a thin black mask.

*--Thomas Irvin Duerksen*

Sweet, mad jesters, one and all  
    Fools for thinking  
    our small, extra taste  
    of freedom  
    has made us more free  
    A mere distraction  
For at our backs, they bind us  
    And put another bolt  
    On the cage's titan door

*--Scott Walker*



## Acceptance

Hey you  
Yes, you  
Look at me.  
No, don't look around me  
Over me  
Or by me  
Look at me, in my eyes and  
See the real me.  
Don't try to fit me  
Into a category  
Or put a title on my head before you  
Know who I am.

Hey you  
Yes, you  
talk with me.  
No, don't talk at me  
About me  
Or for me.  
Talk with me, to the person I am and  
Discover the real me.  
Don't try to stuff me under  
A sub-heading  
Or put a brand on my name before you  
learn the facts.

Hey you  
Yes, you  
Love me.  
No, don't call it love just because you  
Like what you see when you  
Look at me  
Or love who you think you're talking to.  
Love me, the person I am and  
Accept who I am.  
Only then may you  
Look in my eyes  
Talk to my soul  
And truthfully know the real me.

--Jennifer Attaway

### Words

We lead astray by words unpredicted,  
Words that alone can mislead and dismay,  
We wish later on that our tongue was restricted,  
From imprinting on minds the words that will stay.

--Jim Lounsbury

### Unison

What words do you have  
for me  
to express  
this warm tide of emotion?  
Sadness at the thought  
of departure  
Joy at the thought  
of meeting again  
Overwhelming love at the thought  
of your hand in Christ's.  
Though deeper things may never come from  
dreams of the moment  
Our hearts are two forever bound by a mighty One  
Who seeks out His children  
Finds them  
Holds them  
Loves them  
Protects them  
Allows freedom for them  
And sets them in the paths of one another.  
May we be forever one in Him.

--Jennifer Attaway

### Reunion

"Old friend, you have not  
changed one bit," he lies, as he  
hugs the new stranger.

--Scott Walker

*Photo by Matthew Brass*



We walked through the graveyard  
laughing,  
reading the strange names  
without faces

Then we stumbled upon  
a pair of stones that were  
not so unfamiliar  
Motionless, we were drawn  
quietly from our cheer.  
She began to cry.

“It’s different,” she said,  
“When you know them.  
It’s different  
when you have kissed them.”

--Scott Walker

First prize winner, prose

## **Breakfast With Dad**

*By Brian Yensho*

Dad and I drove into Shony’s and parked the car. The scuba convention was over, and Dad was driving me to the airport. At 7 a.m. both of us had our minds set on breakfast. The air conditioner was working well that morning. Goose bumps rose on my arms as we opened the door and the blast of cold inside air billowed out through the openings we had created. My goose bumps would rise and fall several more times this morning, but it would not be on account of the cold air.

We asked for the nonsmoking section. The hostess informed us of the special of the day as she handed the already opened menus to us and gave us the name of our waitress. Since my legs were still sweaty, the green vinyl was cold on my skin as I slid across the seat. The plastic on the corner of the menus had begun to curl and crack. We ordered cheese omelets, hash browns, toast and orange juice. We tried to make small talk while the food was being cooked. Something just wasn’t quite right. I had a tight feeling in my chest, and it was hard to swallow. I was nervous eating breakfast with my dad.

Several years had passed since I had been alone with Dad. I had married and had a couple of kids. I had not minded when Mom said she couldn’t get off work and

was thrilled to think, Dad, instead, would take me to the airport. We would have the whole morning together, just the two of us. Then why couldn't I relax and enjoy his company? A few years earlier, we had reached a point of being at each others throat constantly. He would make a rule, and I would break it. Grounding was a common result. When the sentence had been completed, I would immediately break another rule. More grounding. The irony was that I couldn't stand to be around him and yet purposely broke the rules and got grounded. In addition, the two of us spent the whole day together in the house, making the summer of 1973 a long one, indeed.

I fidgeted under the table and tried to cross my legs. I picked one up and could hear the sound of warm skin rubbing vinyl. Dad looked up and smiled. The food had come, and I was surprised at how fast I was gulping it down. My chance to visit with Dad was being inhaled as I shoveled the food faster. Here I was, not having to pay for a long distance call to talk to him, yet I couldn't even chat.

As we ate our food, I watched how the sun played games on the table. The shady spot was cool until the sun hit it. Then it started to warm up. The sun bent up the side of my orange juice glass then crossed over the top. The hash browns had cooled off to a cold slimy mess. I took the left tine of my fork and pulled one tiny piece of potatoes off the side. While we tried to visit, I kept turning the tiny piece of potato from top to bottom on my plate. The oil they cooked it in had mixed with my ketchup and become a yellowish-red smear about the size of a dime. The rest of the plate had yellow splotches from the omelet. A few pieces of cheese had leaked out during cooking and turned crispy brown on the grill. I cut those off and left them on the plate.

Bread crumbs from the toast and empty jelly packets lay on the table beside the plate. I took my napkin and folded it neatly into a triangle. This shape worked well to make a snow plow and push the crumbs around on the table. Still uneasy with my dad, I could make straight clean lines or coarse lines if I lifted up one of the corners gradually while I pushed the makeshift bulldozer around on the table. The waitress filled my milk too full and left a little ring on the table when she took my cup. The pulp from the orange juice was stuck along the side of the glass and some had collected on the

lip. I don't like pulp.

In the background a baby had begun to fuss. It started out slowly and began to crescendo until its mother gave it a bottle. I guess babies need to eat in restaurants as much as anyone else.

Dad paid the tab and we drove pretty much in silence the rest of the way to the Orlando airport. I had so much to say to him, yet I couldn't. We had made our peace with each other via long distance. My mind was spinning so fast that I couldn't sort through my emotions. I wanted to tell him that I loved him. Hurry up. They're starting to pre-board the plane. People scurried around, gathering up all their carry on baggage and looking under the seats for anything they might have forgotten. Oh no, it's last call for this flight. I'd better do it now. With a deep breath and trembling hands, I looked Dad square in the eye and said, "I love you, Dad." With a smile he said he knew and that he and Mom loved me too. I kissed him on the lips and gave him a hug. The last time I could remember doing that was when I was a little kid in Pajamas on my way to bed.

Mom called

Second prize winner, art

about two weeks later—said she had some terrible news. My father had died. The next time I saw Dad, he was in a coffin. I kissed him there and told him good-bye. Only this time it was good-bye...forever.



*Drawing by  
Matthew Brass*



## **The Love in His Hands**

You have such kind hands Daddy.

Hands that tenderly hold babies and little children to Your chest.

Hands that gently wipe tears from the faces of Your beloved.

You have such strong hands Daddy.

Hands that hold back crowds and control vast multitudes.

Hands that lift up the afflicted and make them whole once again.

You have such holy hands Daddy.

Hands that feed thousands from five loaves and two little fishes.

Hands that, by a single touch, instantly restore sight to the eyes of one who's blind.

You have such kind hands Daddy.

Is that why you always look for one lost sheep, no matter how long it takes and then joyfully gather it into Your arms when found?

Is that why You allowed them to beat You and spit on You without giving up and destroying them with a single word?

You have such strong hands Daddy.

Is that why there are calluses there, because You worked so hard to help Your father with his carpentry?

Is that why you were able to hang from a cross by mere pegs driven into Your flesh?

You have such holy hands Daddy.

Is that why you can create a human being from dirt?

And is that why there are such rough, nail-like scars in Your palms?

I think Your hands are beautiful Daddy, just beautiful.

*--Jennifer Attaway*

## Memories

*By Seth Timmins*

The tree groaned wearily in the late autumn breeze. As the wind whistled through its branches, taking the tree's few remaining leaves with it, the tree sadly recalled its youth.

It recalled the jubilation it felt as it burst through dry earth to feel the sun's rays for the first time. But this joy was short-lived, for it grew in a dense forest, filled with trees more powerful than itself. From the start, it struggled for its very life against the more powerful trees, who would just laugh at it every chance they could get. This would happen year after year. Only by sheer force of will did it manage to stay alive.

But by trying so hard to get ahead, it began to treat all trees other than itself as inferior and it wouldn't care how many saplings it killed in order to survive. So, while it grew majestic on the outside, it grew callous inside.

A small light on a nearby hill brought the tree out of its remembrance. As it watched the light and the smoke that drifted skyward from it, the tree recalled a time long past when it had seen a similar light. It had begun during a calm night. The tree had just settled in for the night, when it noticed an odd smell in the air. It didn't think much of it, so the tree fell asleep. Later that night it was awakened by thousands of screams and an intense heat. The screams were from thousands of creatures running away from what looked like a wall of light, and felt like a wall of heat. The creatures were trampling each other in their haste to get away.

Some strange upright creatures, upon seeing the tree, begged it to lower its branches so they might be safe from the heat. But the tree only turned away in disgust. Just then the wall of heat hit the tree, scorching away all its leaves in an instant. It screamed in pain and agony, and then blacked out.

It awoke some time later to find that where the forest had been, was now a desolate wasteland—devoid of anything living except itself. At first, the tree was glad to find that finally it didn't have to compete anymore to stay alive. Then it looked at itself and saw, where once had been a lofty tree with lovely foliage, now there stood a knarled, burnt tree with not a single leaf left.

Now that the tree was alone, it remembered all the

trees and creatures it had scorned as not being worth its time. It regretted killing those young saplings, who like it, were just trying to stay alive. As days turned into years, the tree grew more and more lonely.

As the tree once again ceased its remembrance, it gazed upon the meadow that had gradually replaced the burnt forest over the years, and sighed. It wondered if there was anyone who really cared how lonely it felt. Abandoning this line of thought, it decided to prepare for another long, cold winter.

One day early the next spring, as the tree was feeling lonely again, it saw a boy running across the meadow toward it. As he came closer, the boy noticed that the tree was very depressed. He asked the tree why this was so. So the tree told the boy about its youth and how it now regretted its past life. The tree also told the boy how utterly alone it felt.

The boy then did something that took the tree completely off guard. He walked up to the tree, hugged it, and said that he forgave the tree. The tree was astonished! It tried to tell the boy that it had killed other trees and even creatures like the boy himself, but the boy didn't care. He said he forgave the tree anyway.

For the first time in its long life, the tree actually felt peace, knowing it wasn't alone anymore.

### To Be Alone

I sit  
with people who  
don't even  
notice  
me.

I talk  
to a guy  
I don't  
even  
like.

I flirt  
with a girl  
I don't even know.  
I'm just too scared to be  
alone.

--Thomas Irvin Duerksen

### Rose of Sharon

Crimson petals of the rose fall softly to an earthly mound below.

Crimson rivulets of Your lifeblood, down Your side doth flow.

Sunshine blossoms the rose and surges life through its tender veins.

Sunshine beats down upon Your thorn-marked brow and reveals Your inflicted shame.

Bowing slightly, the rose closes its blossomed bud for the night.

Bowing Your head, You utter the Father's victory and have thus, given your life.

Dew breath kisses the leaves of the rose in the morning display of affection.

Dew is evident on the boulder that's been removed to prove Your blessed resurrection.

Opening its scarlet face, the rose reaches toward the sun for yet another day of life.

Opening the clouds of glory, You, the Son, will come to retrieve Your children, for whom You have paid the price.

*--Jennifer Attaway*



*--Kim Fenton*

# Thoughts on Ring Around the Rosy

By Kimberly Fenton

*"Ring around the Rosy  
Pocket full of Posies  
Ashes, ashes  
We all fall down"*

What does this mean? This little verse that we chant as children and never get tired of saying, or doing the little dance that goes along with it. Around in a circle holding hands and skipping, then falling down, all laughing and panting. Where did it start? What keeps us passing it on each generation?

*"Ring around the rosy."* Well, I certainly do that every day. In conversations and relationships, in my activities too. Endlessly running in circles, doing things I do, so I can feel good about myself and say that I'm too busy to do things I'd prefer not to do. But what is keeping me from doing these things? Running around the rosy? What is a "rosy" anyway? Someone once said it was a bush, or at least that's the way I've imagined it, and who's to say what that might symbolize.

*"A pocket full of posies."* Posies are flowers I think. Now I don't always run around with a pocket full of posies, and I don't see the world through rose colored glasses. But I know people who do, and they always seem to be quite happy. Maybe a pocket full of posies isn't such a bad idea; you wouldn't miss the reality that you would through rose colored glasses, but you have something close at hand to remind you of the good and the flavor everything with a scent of—well, posy. Maybe it would mean less stress. Not such a bad idea.

*"Ashes, ashes we all fall down."* I thought about this part a lot. Does this mean that eventually everything turns to ashes? Well *"Ashes to ashes and dust to dust."* I guess everything eventually does fall down. I know I do a lot. I know about the ashes part too, because I crash and burn all too often, it seems. *"What goes up, must come down."* I guess this is all true.

So does this teach us a harsh reality or a valuable lesson. That even the posies turn to ashes eventually, and some time or another we must *all* fall down; or that everything has a cycle, beginning and ending, rising and falling and rising again, drawing strength from the cycle itself; in the end, I suppose it really doesn't matter. But I think that the nice thing about the game is that when you fall down, you get right back up and start over again, and you skip in a circle around an imaginary rosy with all pocket full of flowers, and when you fall down, everyone falls down together, not just you. We *all* fall down. And when we do we don't cry because our bottom hurts, we fall around on the ground and laugh at how funny everyone looks, and then we help each other up and do it again.



### The Screw

--Geyesa Mastrapa

I do not stand alone,  
He holds me.  
Firm between thumb  
And index,  
He presses me.  
I do not resist  
His nudge  
And feel myself  
Break the surface  
Of my new stronghold,  
My fresh foundation.  
Slowly he drives  
Me deeper,  
Deeper still  
Into my destiny.  
It is easy,  
But with each twist  
Of his tool  
I lose freedom  
    I lose breath.  
    I lose life.  
I Lose Life.  
And I spin  
Into my own  
Coffin.

--Tanya Cochran



## **The Price of Popularity**

*By Rob White*

Peter Snickel was a nerd. He was also my friend, which is why I should have done something when he first started making ejaculations about being popular. Pete was skinnier than a maple sapling, with a sickly pallor that reminded me of mayonnaise. His clothes were Brady Bunch hand-me-downs. When a gust of wind caught his extra-wide collars, he looked like a forlorn flightless bird.

Kids can judge other kids pretty well. Pete had no other friends that I knew of. The height of his social life was playing chess against his computer. He wasn't a jock either. I hated to see him struggle in gym class; arms flopping like cables and legs moving like telephone poles, his ribs working like rusty bellows as he ran his laps. It was always during this period that the taunting would become sharper.

"Hey Snickel! Didn't your mama ever teach you how to walk?" someone shouted.

"She tried," said senior Sandy Walker, "But it's hard whey your mama has four legs." The whole gym echoed screams of laughter. Pete acted like he never heard. He just kept on, stumbling a bit now and then.

"Pete, can your mom roll over and play dead?" More hysterical screams. The whole class was getting into it now since they had nothing to do until Pete finished his laps around the gym.

"Where's the Kal-Kan, huh, Pete?"

"Which fire hydrant do you use?"

Panting, nose running, Pete finally straggled back to the rest of the group. Sandy, a boy with coal-dust eyes and hair, dribbled a basketball twice and dunked it. After accepting high-fives from the guys and admiring looks from girls, he strode over to where Pete sat wheezing for air on the gym floor. "Pete," he called whistling, "here boy."

Sandy reached down and patted Pete on the head. Kids crowded around now, laughing and telling Pete to sit up and beg. The coach had stepped out in the hall to talk to another teacher. "Ol' Peter here," began Susan loudly, "is just a mutt. He don't even know who his father is."

Pete Snickel's dad had had a heart attack when Pete was barely two. We had talked about it before; there

were no memories.

Sandy was grinning widely now, conscious of the eyes on him. Quickly Pete stood up. He stared dully at the bully towering over him. "I know who my father is, and I don't see that my family is any of your business," Pete ventured.

Sandy's eyes gleamed and his mouth turned up at the corners like a jaguar closing in for the kill. Almost imperceptibly the crowd shifted back; then pressed closer - forming a tight circle around the two boys. Sandy made another verbal stab. "Everybody knows you can't remember your dad, Pete. You've never seen him, so maybe your bitch of a mama made the whole story up." Pete's jaw tightened as Sandy thrust his blade of cruelty in on to the hilt. "And I guess that would make you a little bastard, wouldn't it?" The boy accented his words by shoving Pete backwards. Someone in the back kicked at him when the crowd parted to let him tumble to the floor.

Silence covered the group like a wet blanket. Everyone waited to see what Pete would do.

He picked up a pencil that had fallen out of his pocket and wiped a smear of ooze and blood that was forming on his lip where he had been kicked. I wanted to help him up but couldn't. Not with all those bloodthirsty kids standing around. I waited until he had picked himself up and started for the door before I followed. From the other hallway, I could hear the coach returning and asking what was going on. I don't think anyone knew.

After that day, Pete was never the same. He had been taunted worse before, but maybe the gym scene was the straw that broke the poor Pete's back. I met him on the bus the next morning. "Hello, Steve," he said, grinning self-consciously. "How'd your date go last night?"

"Fine," I replied, somewhat surprised as I took the seat next to him. Since my luck with girls is on average one hundred percent better than Pete's, I usually take him along if we're going to see a movie or something. But lately, after word got around Hartvill Heights that a date with Steve Billings meant having a sixth toe around (Pete), I told him as nice as I could that maybe it would be better if he didn't go all the time. I don't know if it hurt his feelings or not, but he seldom took an interest in the outcome of my dates.

I asked him why he was feeling so chipper today. "Well, it's like this," he leaned back in exaggerated pride.

"I, Peter Snickel, have formulated a theory that, when properly activated, will propel me into the scholastic season with virtually zero emotional stress factors." (He calls pranks, bad jokes and fights emotional stress factors.)

"All right, Pete, in plain English please, what the heck are you talking about? He was obviously very satisfied about something. But what? Another day to get beat up? His answer was no help.

"Steve, you've always been my bestest buddy, but I can't even tell you what this is all about until it works. Let's just say that when I'm finished, no one will ever mess with me again, no sir." He gulped and blushed as if he'd already said too much.

Later that day in Biology, I was making small talk with a cute new transfer when I overheard a conversation behind me. Two of the coolest seniors in school, Lyle Preston and Don Swerve, were discussing a new rumor they'd heard. Something about how Sandy Walker had dared someone to blow up the gym with homemade bombs, and how that person (I didn't hear a name) had accepted the challenge. Lyle and Don were scoffing at the likely possibility. Don remarked that he didn't know anyone stupid or brave enough to do such a thing.

On the bus that afternoon, Pete was full of comments. "I keep telling you, and everybody, that this plan of mine will make me the coolest guy in town. No more nerd for me, no sir. I will be respected, I will be cool enough to...," he paused, his face flushing crimson with the excitement of the thought. "...to hang out with the varsity basketball team!"

I thought a minute. Maybe, just maybe, if his scheme worked, I could use a little popularity boost, too. But all my pleadings were still to no avail, and I had to get off the bus, unenlightened with the secret of local fame.

While I was still pondering Pete's secret the next day in school, a much bigger story was on the tip of everyone's tongues. The whole student body wanted to know who was going to blow up the gym on Friday.

No matter who I talked to, the topic was the same. Who is it? How will they do it? Of course, nobody cared about the gym itself. We've needed a new gym anyway. When we had to run laps in PE, however, it was funny to watch everyone glance around uneasily and stay close to the wall. Coach said we had the fastest time our class had

ever had. In fact, he beamed, the whole school seemed to be running faster. I guess he attributed it to his coaching skills. He was in a good mood the rest of the day; we didn't even get penalized with push-ups when Pete came in slow, as usual.

On Friday, I couldn't wait to get to school. I asked Pete on the bus what he thought about the proposed gym bombing. "I dunno, Steve, but whoever is behind all that must be really smart, and—and brave. I agreed. Pete looked like he could have swallowed a building.

I was heading down the hall toward American Lit in seventh hour when I realized my books were still in my locker. As I was pulling them out, a folded piece of note paper floated to the floor. Oh boy, I thought, that blonde in History really does like me. But when I opened it, I recognized Pete's handwriting; neat, between the margins. The letter was dated that morning. It read:

*"To my only friend and confidante, Steve:*

*Sorry I couldn't tell you what my plan was about, but I knew if I told you, you would have tried to stop me. What I am doing is something I have given much thought to, so don't think I'm bungling something up like I usually do."* I felt a pang of guilt as I read that sentence. *"...All my life, Steve, I have tried my best to make it in this world. God didn't give me much to work with, but I've tried. And all my life, until now, people have judged me because of what I look like and what I can and can not do. I've tried to bear it, but I just can't take it anymore. I'm leaving, Steve. I'm leaving this place and I won't be back for a long time.*

*This last week has been the best week of my life. When I hear people in the halls whispering to each other, or talking in the lunchroom, and I hear them talking about me—ME—even though they don't know that it is me they're talking about—I get a good feeling all over, like someone finally really cares about something I do.*

*Well, my friend, it's time for me to go. An audience awaits, and I can't let them down. At precisely 2:45 p.m., Steve, I am going to discharge four homemade bombs in the gym. Doubtless you have already heard of this undertaking; but you are the only one who knows the exact time. I can trust you, Steve. By the time you read this note I will have already left this world, and the gym will lie in a pile of rubble.*

*You have to admit, Steve, this plan made me very*



*well known. At least, it will after today.*

*Your friend,*

*Peter Alfred Snickel*

I threw down the note and looked at the clock: 2:43. There was still time. I could still run down to the gym and talk Pete out of this silly.... A low tremor shook the whole school. I heard the blast. My knees trembled, not entirely from the explosion. I had to sit down in the hall. People were running past me now, screaming and shouting. I didn't pay any attention. It didn't matter anymore.

Peter Snickel had paid the ultimate price for popularity.



*--Eric Hullquist*

*"Life has a value only when it has something valuable as its object."*

*--Hegel*

## What is Purple?

Purple is violets  
And mayflowers in spring  
And lush velvet drapes  
Like the robes of a king.  
Purple can be pretty  
As asters in fall,  
Or dark and foreboding—  
Rain clouds in a squall.  
Eggplants and cabbages  
Can be purple too  
And sometimes the mountains  
In a far-off view.  
I like all the purple  
I have in my clothes  
But not in the cold  
Of my fingers and toes.  
There's fragrance in purple  
Of lilacs in May  
Each bushful arranged  
Like a giant bouquet.  
Sometimes it's exciting  
How purple can taste—  
Not much blueberry pie ever  
Goes to waste!  
There's purple also in fruit—  
Plums are just fine.  
And bunches of grapes  
Hanging fresh on the vine.  
Some purple is good for  
Everyday use,  
Like the purple I drink  
In a glass of grape juice.  
There's also the honor,  
setting some far apart;  
The pain and the courage  
In each purple heart.

--Tammera Castleberg



**Portrait**

If I were to draw a picture  
    of me  
        and you,  
            I would first draw  
                a hill.  
And I would be at the  
bottom of the hill  
                    struggling  
                to get  
            to the top.  
With blisters on my hands  
    And torn pants  
        And sweat dripping  
            from my forehead.  
With dirt  
    mixed with  
        blood  
            staining my clothing  
from the times  
    I had tripped  
        and fallen  
    then returned to my feet  
    to try again.  
Struggling  
    every inch of the way  
                    Struggling  
And in my picture  
    You would be at the  
                    top  
                looking  
            the other  
    direction.

*--Lori Pettibone*

**Lover**

I am determined,  
Focused.  
I walk swiftly  
Towards my destination.  
My muscles  
Rhythmically respond  
To my brain's  
Orders:

pump, flex, relax;  
pump, flex, relax.

But  
Then the wind changes.  
I feel it  
Slip through my hair.  
It's fingers  
Lift my chin  
Towards the rushing  
Atmosphere.  
It cools my face.  
My thoughts are rent from their  
Sequence.

And I smell you.

I have forgotten  
Until the air,  
Sweet  
With your fragrance,  
Swallows my senses.

My will vanishes.  
My muscles abandon their  
commands.

And for an eternal second,

I inhale.

She, dressed like a clown,  
smiles garishly  
at the man  
who drinks at the bar.  
They talk and laugh.  
He whispers.  
Together they leave  
for a room,  
She, hoping to finally find  
a balm for her  
scalded heart,  
He, hoping to slip out  
before he has  
to buy breakfast for  
his latest one night jester.

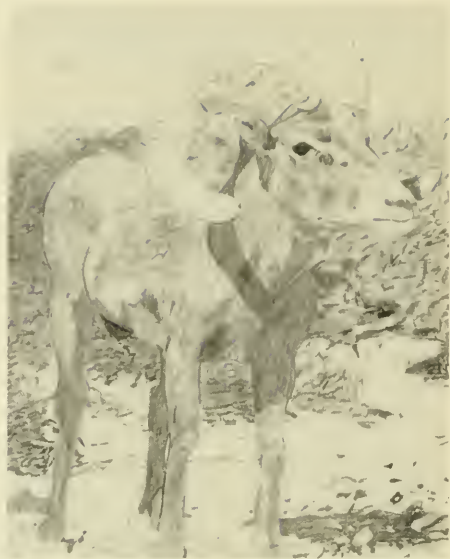
*--Scott Walker*

*--Tanya Crochran*

*"What we love we shall grow to resemble."*  
--Bernard of Clairvaux



--Geysa Mastrapa



--Tissiana Kelley

### **I Counted**

She had lived a full life,  
so they said.  
She had raised three children,  
had seven grandchildren,  
and twelve great-grandchildren.  
Her bent frame had withstood the  
blister of nearly ninety winters.

Yet her once confident stride had been  
reduced to an often disoriented, dependent shuffle.  
The constant grind of life had slowly but surely dulled  
her faculties.  
Her husband had died long ago, and most of her other  
trophies,  
including her memory, had vanished as well.  
Her descendants, who dutifully housed, fed and cared for  
her,  
keeping her from the gates of a nursing home,  
coolly justified her irrational behavior  
by proclaiming "her mind is gone."  
The slow passage of her time seemed to be marked only  
by meals,  
and her daily riding up and lying down.  
Her glazed stare was endlessly directed at the opposing  
wall as though watching some unseen television.

I sat and watched her,  
and counted the days until my next birthday.

--Brian Arner

You can't walk  
In his shoes—  
    feel the oozing blisters  
    and solid calluses  
    from marching to the quarry,  
  
        standing torture,  
        carting the sick..  
            the wounded...  
        the dead  
        (friends,  
        family,  
        children).

But  
He can't walk  
In his shoes,  
    feel the blisters  
    or calluses...

He can't march to the quarry.

He can't stand as torture.  
He can't cart the bodies.

He can't walk  
In his shoes  
    because he hangs  
        (toes naked and pointed,  
        ankles limp,  
        heels rested)  
    by the rope he smuggled.  
Because  
He didn't want his shoes.

And  
You can't walk  
In his shoes  
    because you'd have to dig  
    through 80,000 to find  
Them.

--Tanya Cochran

\*Dachau was a Nazi work camp in Germany during World War II.

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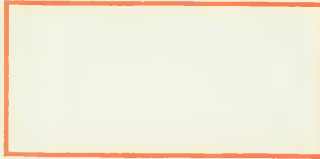


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**SOUTHERN COLLEGE**  
OF SEVENTH - DAY ADVENTISTS